ill persons at such places as it thinks fit." The State/Central Government, therefore, decide in the matter keeping in view the disease burden and other connected issues.

The present policy of the Government is to strengthen the infrastructural facilities and services in the existing mental hospital/institutions in order to maximize the benefits to the mentally ill persons, rather than create new infrastructure, at this stage. At present, there are 40 Mental Health Care institutions in the Public Sector which includes Central Government institutes like NIMHANS and CIP, Ranchi.

The aim of the Government is to identify persons suffering from various mental disorders and epilepsy and manage them at the primary health care centre and district level by trained doctors and with the active support of the families and the community in which the patient lives. Towards this aim, District Mental Health Programme has already been initiated under the National Mental Health Programme and is presently being implemented in 25 districts covering 20 States and Union Territories in the country.

Pulse Polio Programme

*59. SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount of funds earmarked and incurred, so far, on the Pulse Polio Programme; and

(b) by when our country is likely to achieve 'Polio Free Status' completely?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) The Pulse Polio Programme was started in 1995-96. Under this programme, States are given polio vaccine in kind and funds for various activities required for implementing the programme such as Transport, booth mobilization, social mobilization and Information. Education and Communication, etc. For the period from 1995-96 to 2000-01, vaccines worth Rs. 1015.45 crores were supplied to the states. In addition, Rs. 417.59 crores were released to the States during this period for meeting the costs of various activities mentioned above.

(b) India is committed to obtaining polio-free certification by 2005.